

Meeting Summary
Worker's Compensation Advisory Committee -Subcommittee on Health Care
September 11, 2003

Participants

Labor:	Jerri Wood (for Robby Stern), Owen Linch, and Ed Wood
Business:	Amber Balch, Beverly Simmons and Vickie Gore
L&I:	Gary Franklin, Roy Plaeger-Brockway, Bob Mootz, Blake Maresh, Diana Drylie, Susan Campbell, and Bob Mayer
UW:	Tom Wickizer, Deb Fulton-Kehoe, and Terri Smith-Weller
Renton COHE:	Pat Vincent and Grace Casey
Spokane COHE:	Scott Graham, with Dan Hansen via telephone
Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals:	Tom Egan

Introductions – Gary Franklin thanked the business and labor coalitions for their long-term support of the OHS project and welcomed new members Amber Balch of the Association of Washington Businesses and Vickie Gore of Group Health.

OHS and national innovations – Roy Plaeger-Brockway gave an overview of several projects similar to the OHS that have been funded by the Robert Wood Johnson foundation. He will send the articles to anyone who requests them.

The two projects build support between business and labor and involve providers, as well as improve quality of care. One project is called the Mid-American Coalition on Healthcare. It involves 47,000 employees, a coordinated approach to return-to-work, and performance measures. The second project is the North County On the Job Network. This project involves labor, employers, hospitals and providers to coordinate care and improve access to care.

Gary reminded the group that the OHS project is a 6-year study. The evaluation of the Spokane COHE will spill into the next biennium because of the delayed funding.

Research Team Report – Deb Fulton-Kehoe presented data on the Renton COHE. There are currently 123 APPs participating in the pilot with 7369 injured workers seen by participating providers. Overall, over 70% of APPs were turning in the ROAs within 48 hours, with more than 90% of high volume APPs turning them in on time. Sixty-five percent of all providers are filling out the activity prescriptions, with a range of 75% for Emergency Room APPs and 32% for low volume APPs. High volume APPs are calling employers 53% of the time, mid volume 25%, and low volume APPs 9% of the time.

From the date of first medical treatment to the date L&I makes its initial allowance decision, the COHE claims showed approximately a one week average decrease in processing time compared to the year prior to project implementation.

Delivery Team Reports – Western Washington (Renton) COHE team

Pat Vincent provided an update on the activities of the COHE since the last WCAC-HC meeting.

- **Consultants** – They have been having some trouble recruiting neurosurgeons and orthopedists to the COHE project. Part of the issue is the cost of malpractice insurance.

- **Continuing Medical Education** – The Valley system runs CMEs in a self-supporting manner. The CMEs for the COHE, however, are free; thus resources are limited. CMEs continue to be poorly attended. One-on-one training in the APPs’ office works well.
- **Recruitment** - Pat reported that they no longer have all five of the area’s occupational health networks as part of the project, because Health Force opted out, citing competition factors. US Health Works is still involved. Gary pointed out that it was a “tour de force” to get such a competing group involved in the project.
- **Quality Assurance** – The computer data system is greatly improved and can now run reports for time loss and sort claims. Patient satisfaction surveys have a low return (13%), but show overall satisfaction of 5.97 in a scale of 1-7 (with 7 high).

Delivery Team Reports – Eastern Washington (Spokane) COHE Team

Scott Graham, COHE Project Manager, and Dan Hansen (via telephone) represented St. Luke’s Rehabilitation Institute.

- **Overview of project** – They have now entered the second phase of the project and started processing cases as of July 1st. There are now 96 Attending Providers in the Project (APPs) and 9 mentors involved. They have about 330 claims so far.
- **Outreach** – Outreach to the rural communities continues. Several rural doctors have recently signed onto the project. Employers who sign onto the project get automatic E-mails when the COHE receives an ROA for one of their employees. The employer then can link to the database system.
- **Data System (Occupational Medicine Information Tracking System- OMITS)** – The system is in beta testing now. Employers seem to love it, but doctors are struggling a bit with it. Scott showed the committee some of the screens in the OMITS system.

WISHA Advisory Committee request – Ed Wood reported that the WISHA advisory committee at L&I is looking for a group to sponsor an ergonomics clearing house and resource center. Ed agreed to bring the request to the WCAC-HC. After discussion, the group agreed that the parent WCAC committee would need to discuss this, since it is beyond the current scope of the COHEs. The WCAC next meets in December. Ed will report back to the November WISHA advisory committee.

UW Research - Tom Wickizer reported on further analysis of the worker satisfaction survey data. The UW research team conducted detailed analyses of the data to explore the effects of satisfaction on the use of attorneys and the filing of appeals.

The analysis found that those workers less satisfied with how their claim was handled were 4 times more likely to retain an attorney. Those less satisfied with interpersonal quality in the handling of their claim was almost 3 times more likely to use an attorney. They found no significant difference between state fund and self-insured claims.

Next Meeting – The committee agreed that there was no need for a meeting in December. The next meeting will be – **April 7, 2004 - 1:00 – 4:00 - Tukwila Service Location**